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# WESTMORELAND CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda, Maryland 20816

Telephone: (301) 229-7766

March 12, 1993



Mr. Eli Segal  
National Service  
Old Executive Office Building  
Room 145  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Segal,

Enclosed are some materials regarding the Westmoreland Volunteer Corps, sponsored by our local church. My son, Jeff Forbes, who worked with you on various Clinton Campaigns during the primaries and general election, thought you might find it interesting in light of the President's commitment to national volunteer service.

There are several denominationally sponsored volunteer corps in Washington. The Westmoreland Volunteer Corps is unique because it is sponsored and administrated by a single local congregation.

We have been in existence for eight years. Over the past five years applications from college graduates have increased significantly indicating that volunteer service is again thriving on college campuses.

We have found this program advantageous in many ways:

- College graduates find out if they have a vocation for human service work.
- Social service agencies get much-needed, qualified workers at minimal cost.
- Volunteers provide dedicated care to the client communities.
- Members of this congregation become more aware of the needs of the area.

In short everyone wins in this program.

I thought we might be mutually helpful to one another as you investigate the idea of national volunteer service. We would benefit by the publicity this program might receive and you might find us useful in promoting the idea of service.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon M. Forbes". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gordon M. Forbes, Minister



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# Westmoreland Volunteer Corps

January, 1993

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The Westmoreland Volunteer Corps (WVC) began its eighth year by welcoming five enthusiastic young women in August, 1992. They followed in the footsteps of thirty-five men and women, recently graduated from college, who chose to spend a year in the Washington, D.C. area, exploring service to the homeless, the poor, the elderly, in peace and justice advocacy, and to live simply in the Volunteer Corps House.

This house, which is home to the volunteers serving in the WVC, is a traditional colonial-style house, formerly one of the parsonages of the Westmoreland Congregational United Church of Christ. When it was no longer needed as a parsonage, church members took action, in a spirit of concern for the community and in support of young people interested in putting their faith into action, and created the Volunteer Corps, converting the old parsonage into a group home for the volunteers.

The WVC Board, established to guide and administer the Volunteer program, helps to place volunteers in positions related to their interests and abilities. The participating non-profit agencies where they work can make their resources go further because the money they pay the volunteers is just enough to take care of their housing, food allowance, health insurance and a modest stipend for their expenses.

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## BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

**Meg Bryant** is a graduate of the **College of Wooster** in Ohio, having earned her degree in Sociology with a concentration in Anthropology studying ritual and gender. She is serving as Senior Coordinator of food, clothing, and nutrition at **Community Family Life Services (CFLS)**. She also tutors children once a week. This agency provides food, clothing, employment counseling, transitional housing, tutoring for children along with a restaurant where homeless people are trained in food preparation.

that I have to keep going, that, at least, I can help with this small piece of the healing of our world. In the words of the writer Alice Walker, 'Live by the Word and keep walking.'"

Meg says, "Through this wide variety of services which CFLS provides, I come into contact with many different people — from homeless men who sleep on park benches to a mother with twelve children to homebound seniors. Their needs are a constant reminder of the amount of work which needs to be done in this world. There is a lot of hurt and pain in our society, and at times it seems hopeless. But just when things seem like a lost cause someone will smile or a kid comes running up to you and gives you a great big hug. Then I know

